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Two Surveys on SAG

James E. Erickson

In the first issue of *Swedish American Genealogist*, Nils William Olsson—who at the time was not only SAG's founder but also its editor and publisher—presented the following rationale for starting the journal:

The publication of a new genealogical journal may seem quite superfluous at a time when many of such journals seem to be as ephemeral as the life of a dragonfly. Despite the heavy odds, which seem to marshal against an undertaking of this kind, the editor has sensed for some time the need for a special forum beamed at Swedish America....

It is therefore the aim of SAG (and we trust that this acronym does not connote any negative characteristic of the magazine's contents or style) to be a forum in which readers will find inspiration, assistance and enthusiasm in furthering their own genealogical studies....

Finally, we should say that SAG belongs to its readers. By letting us know what you desire, we shall hope to be able to meet those desires.¹

History has shown that Nils William's instincts were correct; and "despite the heavy odds," SAG has now entered its nineteenth year of publication—seventeen under Nils William's editorship and the last two under mine. Passing of time and change of leadership virtually require concomitant internal and external reviews. They require that mission and purpose be evaluated; that new goals be set and new visions be explored; that questions be asked and answered. Has SAG been a "special forum beamed at Swedish America"? Have SAG readers found "inspiration, assistance and enthusiasm in furthering their own genealogical studies"? Has SAG met their desires? To answer these questions and renew the dialogue with SAG subscribers/readers, two studies were designed and implemented.² This article summarizes their major results.

"Summary of *Swedish American Genealogist* 1981-1998"

For the Eighth Annual SAG Genealogical Workshop held in the fall of 1998 in Salt Lake City, Utah, I was asked to lead a session for workshop participants on my vision for *Swedish American Genealogist*. This proved to be a very

¹ See inside front cover of *Swedish American Genealogist* 1 (March 1981).

² The self-evaluation and subscriber/reader evaluations considered in this report are just two components among other important informational sources that could have been considered in an overall analysis of SAG. Therefore, the results may best be interpreted as strictly impressions.

fortuitous request for me personally. I was completing my first year as editor of a journal with a seventeen-year history about which I was not fully apprised. Therefore, in preparation for my Salt Lake City presentation, I felt compelled to read all of the back issues of *SAG*. This led to an initial analysis of this published material that developed into my internal review of *SAG*.

Both the analysis and the reasoning behind it were simplistic. I assumed that just as weekly calendars and checkbook registers reflect how individuals spend (value?) their time and money, so the total number of pages in *SAG* devoted to certain types of articles should not only reflect how its editors have apportioned publishable material but also provide insight into the priorities they have established on behalf of subscribers/readers.

I began my analysis by composing a chronologically arranged list of all articles published in *SAG* between 1981-1998 that included the following data: year of publication, length of article (i.e., number of pages), and title of article. Each article was then rearranged into one of eleven easily recognizable, but admittedly arbitrary, categories (i.e., types of articles). Compilations of total pages and the percentage of total pages for each of the eleven categories were then made. The completed, eight-page manuscript, "Summary of *Swedish American Genealogist* 1981-1998," was made available to all participants attending the Eighth Annual SAG Genealogical Workshop and all SAG subscribers as an enclosure in the mailing of the December 1998 issue. The essential results of this analysis are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Results of "Summary of *Swedish American Genealogist* 1981-1998." Types of articles are ranked in descending order by total pages.

<i>Type of Article</i>	<i>Total Pages</i>	<i>Percentage of Total Pages</i>
1. Directories / Lists	1,355	32.9
2. Ancestor Tables (Ahnentafeln) / Families	470	11.4
3. Annual Indexes	449	10.9
4. Genealogical Queries	430	10.4
5. Biography / Personal History	427	10.4
6. Background Info. / Educational / Geneal. Aids	357	8.7
7. Declarations of Intention & Naturalizations	197	4.8
8. Searching For / Finding Ancestors	128	3.1
9. Archives / Libraries / Research Institutes	121	2.9
10. Literature / Book Reviews	91	2.2
11. Miscellaneous	91	2.2
Total	4,116	99.9

The data in Table 1 are quite clear. When the entire publishing effort of *SAG* between 1981-1998 is considered, three distinct clusters emerge. The first cluster consists of just one type of article—Directories / Lists. Fully one-third (32.9%) of *SAG*'s eighteen-year output of 4,116 pages has been devoted to this category. The second cluster is composed of the next five types of articles (ranked 2-6 in Table 1), each of which represents approximately 10.4% (range 8.7%-11.4%) of total pages published between 1981-1998. Collectively, they make up 51.8% of *SAG*'s total, eighteen-year output of pages. The third cluster is composed of the last five types of articles (ranked 7-11 in Table 1), each of which represents approximately 3% (range 2.2%-4.8%) of total pages published between 1981-1998. Collectively, they make up only 15.2% of *SAG*'s total, eighteen-year output of pages.

“Subscriber Survey on *SAG*”

A second survey—“Subscriber Survey on *SAG*”—was developed as an external review instrument. It was designed to “help improve the quality and usefulness of *SAG*” to its readers. In Part 1 of this survey, respondents were asked to rate *SAG* in terms of their level of interest in each of twenty items by circling a response, based on a scale from 1 (low interest) to 5 (high interest). In Part 2 of this survey, respondents were provided the opportunity to write short responses to the following three questions: What do you like *best* about *SAG*? What do you like *least* about *SAG*? How do you think the quality and/or usefulness of *SAG* could be *improved*?

The “Subscriber Survey on *SAG*” was made available to all participants attending the Eighth Annual *SAG* Genealogical Workshop and all *SAG* subscribers as an enclosure in the mailing of the December 1998 issue. As of 1 April 1999, ninety-five individuals had returned survey forms.³ The essential results of Part 1 (Questions 1-4) of this survey are summarized in Table 2.

Arguably, the single most useful item in the survey was Question 1—“What is your overall impression of *SAG*?” Fully 94.3% of subscribers/readers have a high (52.9%) or moderately high (41.4%) overall impression of *SAG*. This overwhelmingly positive response suggests to me that *SAG* is clearly on the right track. Interesting and rather clear-cut responses were also seen in Questions 2a-2k, which asked respondents to rank the various types of articles

³ The total number of current *SAG* subscribers is 870—634 individuals in North America; 171 individuals in Sweden; and 65 libraries/archives. Disregarding the 65 libraries/archives, the overall response rate was 11.8% (95/805). The overall North American response rate was 13.6% (86/634) and the overall Swedish response rate was 5.3% (9/171). Surveys continue to arrive in the mail.

The overall response rate (approximately 12% of subscribers) is important to remember. Such data may not necessarily provide reliable information.

that appear in SAG. When the percentages of respondents choosing options 5 or 4 (signifying high or moderately high interest) are combined, certain types of articles are clearly of higher interest to SAG subscribers/readers. The top five (ranked in descending order) were Genealogical Aids (88.1%); Searching For (85.5%); Annual Index (82.5%); Genealogical Queries (76.7%); and Biography (70.4%).

Table 2. Results of "Subscriber Survey on SAG," showing the percentage of responses to each choice (1-5) for each of the twenty survey categories. Statistics were calculated from 95 surveys received by 1 April 1999.

Survey Categories	Interest In Survey Categories					N ⁺	X [†]	SD [‡]
	<i>High</i>	4	3	2	<i>Low</i>			
	5				1			
	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)			
1. Overall Impression	52.9	41.4	5.7	-	-	87	4.5	0.6
2a. Genealogical Aids	67.4	20.7	10.9	1.1	-	92	4.5	0.7
2b. Biography	37.4	33.0	24.2	3.3	2.2	91	4.0	1.0
2c. Searching For	61.1	24.4	12.2	2.2	-	90	4.4	0.8
2d. Declarations	30.6	30.6	28.2	10.6	-	85	3.8	1.0
2e. Lists/Directories	38.9	21.1	31.1	7.8	1.1	90	3.9	1.1
2f. Archives/Libraries	35.2	30.7	22.7	11.4	-	88	3.9	1.0
2g. Ancestor Tables	19.3	21.6	34.1	13.6	11.4	88	3.2	1.2
2h. Book Reviews	30.4	31.5	31.5	4.3	2.2	92	3.8	1.0
2i. Genealogical Queries	56.7	20.0	17.8	4.4	1.1	90	4.3	1.0
2j. Miscellaneous	14.4	34.4	44.4	5.6	1.1	90	3.6	0.8
2k. Annual Index	48.4	34.1	14.3	3.3	-	91	4.3	0.8
3a. "How to do"	65.2	19.6	14.1	1.1		92	4.5	0.8
3b. Use of Computers	34.8	28.3	16.3	14.1	6.5	92	3.7	1.3
3c. Use of Internet	45.6	27.8	12.2	8.9	5.6	90	4.0	1.2
4a. Interest in Canada	8.5	4.9	20.7	14.6	51.2	82	2.0	1.3
4b. Interest in East Coast	28.4	16.0	14.8	18.5	22.2	81	3.1	1.5
4c. Interest in Midwest	70.7	15.2	9.8	-	4.3	92	4.5	1.0
4d. Interest in South	11.7	2.6	23.4	22.1	40.3	77	2.2	1.3
4e. Interest in West Coast	16.3	22.5	16.3	17.5	27.5	80	2.8	1.5

⁺ N = Number of respondents. Total N = 95. Note that in all survey categories a certain percentage of respondents failed to indicate a choice.

[†] X = Mean: the average of the responses in a given category based on the 1-5 scale. A good measure for summarizing results.

[‡] SD = Standard Deviation: an index of the variability among the responses. The lower the SD, the greater the similarity of responses. In this context, a SD of 0.8-1.0 can be considered low.

Similar high interest is seen in the responses for Questions 3a-3c. Once again, if the percentages of respondents choosing either option 5 or 4 in these categories are combined, the three survey categories can be ranked as follows: "How to do" (84.8%); Use of Internet (73.4%); and Use of Computers (63.1%).

The parochial interests of *SAG* subscribers/readers are clearly delineated in responses to Questions 4a-e. Eighty-five percent of respondents indicated a high or moderately high interest in the Midwest, compared to only 42% in the East Coast, 37% in the West Coast, 13% in the South, and 10% in Canada.

Part 2 of the "Subscriber Survey on *SAG*" consisted of three questions that required written responses. What follows are compilations of respondents' answers to each of the three questions. A short compilation of unsolicited comments made by respondents is also included.

Survey Question 5: What do you like *best* about *SAG*?

- Can I say everything? It is one of the few things I get in the mail that I start reading the same day I get it. Not that I finish it that quickly.
- The compact format, the clarity of the writing, and the ongoing contact with people in Sweden.
- News about new sources and archives. The directories are especially useful, even if only as examples.
- Stories of people finding family in Sweden.
- The "how to" articles.
- Articles that focus on specific aspects of Swedish culture as they relate to genealogy....This kind of information is almost inherently known among Swedish-born or fluent speakers but is very difficult to obtain in the U.S. with only limited Swedish reading ability. Also interesting are the articles on research methods, the internet, and addresses of societies.
- The scholarly articles on New Sweden by Peter S. Craig and transcriptions of source material (and just lists of such) on Swedes in America (and Americans in Sweden!) pre-1850.
- I enjoy almost everything, but especially biographical articles and articles about Swedes and Swedish Americans who served in the military.
- The publication is a "keeper;" put together and set up beautifully. The articles are well written and nicely annotated.
- I always look forward to receipt of issues and usually read each number cover to cover, often going back to reread and check something at a later date.
- Articles on "how to do" Swedish genealogy, including names and addresses of places to contact for assistance and what kind of assistance they provide.
- I enjoy everything in every issue, perhaps some articles more than others. But I read it cover to cover.
- I subscribe solely for the articles about the early Swedes and Finns who settled along the Delaware River in the 1600s. I do enjoy reading some of the other articles, though.
- Personal accounts, such as the articles in the December 1998 issue written by Dooley and Oakes. They have rich genealogical information and reflect the rewards of the search.

- I enjoy SAG—cover to cover.
- Interesting articles of a diverse nature.
- I was able to put together cousins in Sweden with cousins in Kentucky, Montana, and California, because of the queries. What a thrill!
- Articles like [the one written by] Larry Oakes.
- That it is published by a Swedish Research location. I wish I were located closer so as to avail myself of the services at the Swenson Center.
- I don't know that there has been any article that has grabbed me except for the publishing of my Ahnentafel.
- It is interesting to learn about people and facts one didn't know.
- [Reading about] life experiences of persons who were immigrants or those researching their ancestors.
- SAG usually arrives promptly at the end of each quarter.
- I especially liked "Search for the 'Old Country' Enriches Life in the New."
- Information that is helpful in my own family research. Also articles of personal interest about early immigrants.
- I like SAG for what it gives me personally—a sense of who I am in relationship to the flow of history....Sweden and America are connected in many ways and I enjoy learning of how families came to America and what happened to them....I am still looking for one branch or two of the family....and I find that SAG gives me hope. I just might find them.
- Its format and the niche it fills. The broad range of topics covered. How it helps both Swedish Americans and Swedes, especially through Genealogical Queries.
- [SAG material] has usually been presented in a most attractive and readable style and format.
- Genealogical Queries. I use them to challenge members of [our society]; to get our group involved in helping find lost persons in history.
- {The} variety of articles and subjects, and the emphasis on accuracy and detail.
- [SAG] provides a lot of information that is not available elsewhere.
- Short answer—everything!
- Its handy size, the colors [on the cover], the index of contents on the cover, the old photos, and the queries section (good for interaction among readers).
- Its quality and level of scholarship, the variety and scope of the contents, and its efforts to report on resources that enable us to be aware of new items of Swedish American interest.
- Size, format, variety of articles (most very well written), and the comprehensive index.
- The listing of genealogical societies in Sweden helped me find ancestors from the 16th century. Articles about New Sweden [and] human interest stories are fun to read. Church records from Minnesota.
- Quite a lot. Difficult to pick out one or two best. [I] enjoy the Ahnentafeln.
- Its purpose and the implementation of the purpose.

- Lifestyle articles about immigrants.
- Literature reviews, especially when the original book/thesis was in Swedish.
- I like *SAG* just the way it is.
- Continued history of Swedes in Delaware.
- That it exists and continues.
- I am a fan of articles that reveal clues that might help me flesh out my own research and add to my knowledge of, say, naming patterns, migration routes, land ownership laws in Sweden, occupations held by immigrants (in Sweden and North America), and factors (economic, social and religious) prompting emigration from a given Swedish community.
- I found my family in Sweden! None of this [would have happened] without *SAG*! Love you.
- Size of magazine; font size and style; length of each issue; little advertising; Queries section.
- That there are many interesting things to read about.
- When I read some articles, I get new ideas or find someone who can help me.
- The great variety of subjects.
- [The] stories about individuals, as researched and written by present-day family members....Every issue could include such a story.
- Genealogical aids [and] stories about searches. Biographies and histories [are] usually very well done.
- The informative and high quality articles.
- Size and format are good; index of personal and place names [is] important.
- The Queries and the Ahnentafeln. They have helped me locate my relatives in Sweden and have provided ancestors I didn't know about.
- The personal biographies [and] stories about research success.
- The variety of topics and the pictures.
- I have read with interest every article in all issues....My favorites are those by persons who have "found" their Swedish roots, like Larry Oakes's article.
- The whole layout.
- Queries, ahnentafeln, and sources like applications for U.S. citizenship, where you try to identify the applicants.
- It helps me to learn about Swedish American genealogy.
- The [opportunity] to read about Swedes who emigrated and their lives in America.

Survey Question 6: What do you like *least* about *SAG*?

- When the balance [between] general interest and specific individuals swings toward the latter. (My relatives never seem to appear in the latter!)
- [That *SAG* is] not published every month.
- Nothing—an excellent publication.
- [*SAG*] is of very little help in genealogy searching [and has] little general information about Sweden.

- Poorly reproduced halftones.
- [What] I find the least interesting are the Ahnentafeln.
- Personally, I have zero interest in colonial New Sweden. Might be worth surveying among the readership.
- Swedish royalty and/or nobility news and its connections.
- A long article about some specific person or family that only has interest for a small group of possible readers.
- The very long delivery. It is now the beginning of March [and I just got the] December issue
- That it comes so late. I got the December 1998 issue in March 1999.
 *[Note: The two previous responses were from Swedish subscribers.
 Fourth class mail is obviously slow, but least expensive!—Editor]
- The long lists that sometimes take up space that could be devoted to other topics of more general interest. I don't mean that lists should not be published, but I would prefer that they not take up most of an issue.
- “Anna Toffels [☺]”—the bare bones ones. Personal accounts of “how I found *farfar*” are sometimes very elementary and naïve, but interesting if the writer solved a particularly tricky problem.
- That it doesn't feature enough articles and items about genealogy in Sweden, where ultimately all Swedish-Americans (hope to) find their ancestry.
- SAG* has tried so hard to be scholarly that few people subscribe to it. In recent years, I get it because it is tied to the Swenson Center membership.
- A lot about Minneapolis and Chicago. My family was in Kittson County, MN and it would be nice to see some lists from there sometime.
- My one, major complaint is that it is just too long between issues....Still *SAG* is worth the wait.
- Ahnentafeln—since the general interest for them must be very limited in a forum like this.
- [The] ancestor tables, which are of primary interest to their authors. However, my ambition is to have my ancestor table completed and published one day.
- Ancestor tables—they are not of much use to me and waste many pages.
- So far I have not been able to make use of lists, but I'm sure others have. Ahnentafeln are not very informative to the general public.
- Mediocre writing (sometimes, not always); dull design and appearance; some issues seem to be dominated by lists, registers and tables, leaving little room for other material of general interest and more readable.
- There is too much stress on articles like New Sweden that most of us have no connection to [and] can't relate to. Most of us are Midwesterners.
- The thing I probably like the least is that there are only four issues per year. Any hope of going to six?
- Lists of names are not generally very useful.
- Probably the least useful (but not uninteresting as I am always hopeful to find a name) is a list of ancestors with dates and places but without an article.

- Articles are of interest in only a few cases. They tend to be too academic [and] better suited to a publication for people interested in reading not research.
- [I] haven't found a lot that meets my personal research needs.
- That it is always late. I'd like to see you inch forward over say two years, having each issue arrive closer to the publication date.
- [I] realize the dominance of Swedes in the Midwest; however, I come from a "pocket" of Swedes in northern Worcester County, MA, and would like to see some Swedish-related stories/articles about New England.
- Lists are done alphabetically, but chronologically. That is not good.
- I think that SAG has too much information and is too focused on the earliest immigrants. I want more information about the people who immigrated at the end of the nineteenth century.

Survey Question 7: How do you think the quality and/or usefulness of SAG could be *improved*?

- [Include] more general, how to do, and background articles.
- Have more on Midwest; some articles on church records and their usefulness in searching for Swedish ancestors.
- I think stories showing how people have discovered their Swedish roots through SAG would be welcome and most interesting.
- Transcribe vital records from Swedish American newspapers....Transcribe state census records for Swedish communities. (They are difficult for some of us to get on Inter-Library loan.)
- It should have more pages per year and more genealogical queries.
- Give names and addresses of accredited genealogists willing to undertake investigations and, if possible, your opinion of them.
- The quality is excellent now.
- More space for queries; but I would not want anything cut back to do so.
- I'd like more articles on Swedes/Swedish settlements in Minnesota; publish web address sites for Sweden/Swedish American genealogical groups; start a web site for queries through SAG; put more "lists" on the internet (with the address and a summary in SAG). Could permission be received to publish general interest articles from Swedish genealogical magazines?
- Discussion of Norwegians entering through Quebec to Chicago; Swedes in Kansas.
- I think more space needs to be devoted to search aids and general support for those of us in the trenches.
- Devote a lot more space to reader queries [and] less copy per query.
- I don't believe I can help here. You're doing OK!
- The halftones (illustrations) should be on coated paper stock to boost reproduction clarity.
- Keep up the variety; keep expanding the "how to" articles with sources both here and in Sweden.

- More articles of general interest, such as research “how to’s,” while continuing the publication of records that might not be available otherwise.
- What I would find of great interest would be the study of the parishes, villages and towns in Sweden from which the immigrants came. What did they look like? What, if any, maps of the towns, villages and parishes [are available]? It is helpful to know about the places emigrants left.
- [Include] some general articles to go along with very specific articles.
- More about me and less about other people!
- Stick to articles that will help the genealogist discover his/her past. Stay away from articles that The Swedish-American Historical Society prints (they are too highbrow or scholarly).
- Tell us if any of the queries in the ancestor searches ever lead to a discovery. Give us a follow-up.
- For those of us who do genealogical research, SAG should have more research-oriented articles, e.g., on finding aids or customs that might explain why something happened.
- Put lists and directories on the web. In fact, it would be great to have all the issues on the web.
- Give us Internet addresses for good quality information, particularly from Sweden. Also information on Swedish social and immigrant societies.
- Add more articles and content that are pre-Swedish-America (i.e., about the roots in Sweden of Swedish-American genealogy). This may require expanding the length of SAG. America needs a full-service publication on the order of Sweden’s *Släkthistoriskt Forum*. I’m not sure that is the role SAG wants to fill, but I personally would like to see it.
- Perhaps more information on archives, libraries, etc., that contain Swedish material or even just a listing—on both sides of the Atlantic.
- [I] would like to see more “how to” articles for doing Swedish research without going to Sweden (preferably using my computer and Internet resources).
- I think you are doing it by this survey....Lists should be curtailed to only the most important.
- Articles about the history of each county in Sweden.
- SAG has always been on the right track—its readers friendly, not pedantic.
- Begin a one-page course lasting four issues or so on Gothic script. Short (6-8 line) examples taken from parish records could be published in one issue [and] then transliterated and translated in the following issue.
- Methodology articles for Swedish research; migration history (including both Swedish and American geographic areas); updates on genealogy in Sweden.
- Possibly a series on various counties in the Midwest with Swedish history.
- [Articles about what manors and estates] were like in the 1800s and what they are like now; [articles about] rail service in Sweden and the U.S. in the 1800s; articles on military service in Sweden.
- It needs to be larger.

- More articles in which people have found their ancestors in Sweden; more articles on nobility and clergy, from whom many of us descend; more articles on Swedish communities in the Midwest.
- Perhaps an occasional article on an individual genealogical archive in the various Swedish *län*; information on churches whose records burned or are otherwise not available; Canadian immigration/ports of entry.
- More maps and explanations regarding the counties, provinces and parishes in Sweden. Historical articles about boundary changes, social issues, and religion that caused unrest among Swedish people.
- I often wish that *SAG* would broaden its content to become *The Scandinavian-American Genealogist*. I would like to see more written about twentieth century genealogy (e.g., articles about Swedes who remained in Sweden and immigrants who arrived after 1900).
- I would like more articles about Swedes in Kansas. They seem to be neglected. How did they come? Were they sponsored by land companies, etc.? How about Swedes who set sail from Denmark?
- I would like to see more articles about Swedish life in earlier years. Historical accounts of events in various provinces could serve as enrichment in genealogical searches. As an example, I have several ancestors who were soldiers. I found Carl-Erik Johansson's article in the June 1994 issue...to be very helpful in understanding the everyday life of a Swedish soldier.
- More on research in Swedish archives and research institutes.
- Keep publishing.
- Is there material from Sweden that could be translated?
- More articles contributed by Swedish genealogists and scholars.
- Articles about history and customs in Sweden that affect what we see in Swedish records; articles about the fate and social standing of illegitimate babies and unwed mothers.
- Increase the part that Swenson Center at Augustana College plays as a location for central focus. They require [more] resources to be more effective.
- I do look forward to each issue and hope it is possible to adhere to publication dates such that we can receive [*SAG*] regularly every three months.
- By directing it to "real" people. An example would be the growth, in recent years, of *Ancestry* magazine. It used to be a six-page, dull piece of work, but it has shaped up into an interesting publication with varied information.
- I often wonder if *SAG* and the *The Swedish-American Historical Quarterly* could be combined into one periodical.
- More space for genealogical queries.
- Possibly every two years, list members' names and addresses and their surnames of interest.
- I'd like to read about late nineteenth and early twentieth-century emigrants and where they settled on the East Coast.
- More information about locating relatives in the U.S. and Canada.

- Help me put together the history of Swedes that came to southwest Missouri in the 1800s. There are fifteen towns in this area with Swedish roots.
- I believe *SAG*'s attractiveness can be maintained and even enhanced by good balance between academic and popular subject matter.
- Realizing the known sources of information on Swedes in the southern U.S. is somewhat limited, I still believe that more on and from this geographic area would be useful.
- *SAG* might reprint [historical] articles from Swedish journals. Why nothing on Swedes (and Danes) in the Caribbean? What about letters written home by Swedish diplomatic families from 19th century U.S.?
- For me (a Swede), it would be very helpful to learn more about how to find the immigrants in the U.S. at the end of the nineteenth century.
- [Include] more articles on "searching for" ancestors.

Unsolicited comments from respondents

- I will take *SAG* until I'm unable. I like it.
- I really appreciate the effort that goes into the publication of *SAG*. I'm happy to be a subscriber and grateful the magazine exists at all!
- Thanks. All in all, you do a good job.
- "Search for the Old Country" is a gem. It is written beautifully, expressing emotions all researchers know. At the same time, there is information about how to search for family roots.
- Keep up the good work!
- I have so much to learn...any help would be useful. A suggestion always makes one think of other sources. Keep up the good work!
- When *SAG* arrives, I drop everything and read it from cover to cover!
- Thank you. Wish you the best of luck and success.
- Thanks for the great publication and all the time and efforts of the editor and editorial committee to put *SAG* together. [It is] appreciated.
- I have an idea for an [article] myself, but I'm afraid you won't print it because I'm not a professional genealogist.
- A very fine journal!
- You do a good job. I found my great-grandfather twice in your magazine.
- Generally I find your publication very interesting.
- I admire your tenacity for trying to improve an interesting magazine. Keep up the good work.
- Thank you for seeking information about interests and for soliciting articles.
- Nils William has been an inspiration!
- I have appreciated my association with Nils William, whom I highly admire.
- Thanks for the opportunity to give input and for trying to make *SAG* an even better publication.
- I do think *SAG* is an above-average publication and salute your efforts to continue this quality.

Conclusion

I am encouraged by the realization that most *SAG* subscribers/readers have a high or moderately high overall impression of the journal. Such numbers could be used to support the notion that change is not necessary. The old adage, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it," comes to mind. Nonetheless, I am disturbed by the fact that there is, in some cases, a poor correlation between *SAG*'s historical publishing effort (see Table 1) and the current interests of survey respondents (see Table 2). For example, Genealogical Aids ranked first in current interest but only sixth in historical output. Similarly, Searching For ranked second in current interest but eighth in historical output. Interestingly, the Annual Index, Genealogical Queries and Biographies ranked third, fourth, and fifth, respectively, in both surveys. *SAG* subscribers/readers have also spoken clearly about their interest in articles on how to do genealogy and the use of the Internet and the computer in genealogical research. *The current imbalances that have been illuminated by the two surveys on SAG clearly need to be addressed and redressed.*

I am intrigued by the indefinite (indefinable?) character of *SAG* subscribers/readers. It brings to mind students in my biology classes whose academic abilities, educational backgrounds, ages, interests, motivations, maturity levels, ethnic backgrounds, and social circumstances span the spectrum of possibilities. Similarly, *SAG* subscribers/readers seem to epitomize diversity vis-a-vis Swedish American genealogy. Even a cursory look at the self-reported interests and disinterests of respondents seems to confirm this. It is reflected in such areas as degree of familiarity with primary source material (Swedish and American), research technique and ability, experience and skill, knowledge of history and geography, parochial versus global outlooks, scholarly versus general interests, etc. Thus, my challenge will be (as it was for my predecessor) to deliver a quality product that appeals to a rather diverse community of readers.

Finally, I would remind you that this "special forum beamed at Swedish America" requires your active and direct support if it is to continue to inspire, assist, and instill enthusiasm in Swedish American genealogists. If you want to see more Genealogical Queries published, submit them. If you want to see more "how to do" or "success in finding ancestors" articles, write them. Share your expertise; your story; your knowledge of new software; or your latest discoveries on the Internet. In the inaugural issue Nils William noted that "*SAG* belongs to its readers." I couldn't agree more! I encourage all of you to become active participants in future issues of *SAG*, so that your journal will truly be reflective of your diverse interests and abilities.